

The recent worldwide spread of English as a global medium for communication has initiated a discussion about possible issues related to such a development. Although critics of the increased use of English seem to be reluctant to accept the changing situation, positive effects outweigh potential disadvantages.

One of the main arguments of opponents to an international communication in English is that an increased use would constitute a fundamental threat to linguistic and cultural diversity. As English would expand, the use of regional native languages may become increasingly restricted. Consequently, this restriction might gradually lead to a loss of previously distinct languages. Considering the risk that the “[n]umber of languages worldwide” might decrease steadily within the next 200 years (Graddol 2006: 60), the further threat of English as a Lingua Franca should be taken seriously.

However, English could also co-exist with local languages and cultures and thus prove to be beneficial. In this respect, it seems essential to take account of the different levels in which each language would be used. While English could serve as a medium for international communication and interaction, native languages can still be used on a national level. In this way, the use of English as an additional language could actually facilitate a country’s global interaction while the nation would still maintain its cultural identity (Wheaton 2011: 1).

In addition, a significant number of the world’s population speaks English as their first language which would facilitate a further implementation of English as the language of international communication. The greater the number of already existing speakers the fewer the number of those who would have to learn an additional language. Moreover, one of the main tools for global communication, the Internet, already has a significant percentage of native English-speaking users (Thurlow et al. 2004: 121). Using English to interact internationally would therefore seem reasonable as one of the most significant channels for global communication would not have to adapt its linguistic behavior.

In conclusion, the advantages of the global spread of English seem to be predominant. Although critics fear the reduction of individual languages, a co-existence of local means of communication and English as a second language would be advisable. Such a step would only necessitate small adaptations in the establishment of a globally interacting community as English is already spoken by a significant number of individuals.

Task Fulfilment Band 3**Justification**

All salient points contained in the prompt are addressed (references to both sources of visual information and at least one of the other quotations; answer to the central question in the prompt).

The student is, to a fair degree, able to present an argument and give a personal opinion. However, some arguments are not sufficiently supported by evidence or examples (e.g. *the further threat of English as a Lingua Franca; facilitate a country's global interaction; Such a step would only necessitate small adaptations [sic] in the establishment of a globally interacting community*).

The student does not always integrate sources effectively into his/her own argument and has misrepresented some points (e.g. simplification of Wheaton's argument). The representation of the visual information should be more precise (e.g. include figures and percentages). Overall, the reader would still get the correct general idea of the sources.

Formal text type requirements are largely met, with the exception of the use of a direct quotation for the title of the line graph ("*n]umber of languages worldwide*").

NB: This script represents band 3 for task fulfilment, but the benchmark score cannot be generalised to other scale criteria.